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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the conviction of El Sayed Hassan Rashwan, age 27, an Egyptian national living in Richmond. Rashwan had been indicted by a federal grand jury and charged with marriage fraud to circumvent immigration laws, identification fraud, and false statements to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Rashwan was convicted today by a federal jury of all counts.

Mr. McNulty stated: "Since 9/11, we have learned that identity and immigration fraud are part of the terrorist play book. That's why we must restore the integrity of America's identification document and immigration procedures. This case is an important step forward in this effort. "

As set forth in the Indictment, Rashwan entered the United States at New York City, on July 2, 1999, on a six-month visitor's visa, but fraudulently stayed in the United States after the expiration of his visa. After unsuccessfully attempting to obtain a driver's license in New Jersey, Rashwan traveled from New Jersey to Virginia in September 2000 to obtain identification documents from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. As part of the application process, a conspirator submitted a false residency certification for Rashwan. As a result, Rashwan obtained a Virginia Identification Card and a Driver's License, which made it easier for him to live and work in the United States without authorization. Rashwan sought permanent resident status by entering into a sham marriage with Jane Doe on December 6, 2000, and then submitted fraudulent documents and made fraudulent oral representations to the INS regarding his "marriage" to Jane Doe to obtain a permanent residency "green card." To carry out the scheme to deceive the INS, Rashwan and a co-defendant made it fraudulently appear to the INS, and to other federal and state agencies that might be in contact with the INS, that Rashwan and Jane Doe were continually living together as man and wife in Richmond, Virginia.

Rashwan faces a maximum sentence of 75 years in prison and \$1,750,000 in fines. United States District Judge Henry Hudson scheduled the sentencing of Rashwan for December 13, 2002 at 10 a.m.

In a separate verdict, co-defendant Barbara Hancock, age 44, of Richmond, who was also charged with conspiracy to defraud the INS and who waived trial by a jury, was found not guilty by United States District Judge Henry Hudson.

The case was jointly investigated by agents of the INS, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. The case was prosecuted for the United States by AUSAs David T. Maguire and S. David Schiller.

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